

624 of the tribe" recited prayers and sacrificed a white horse which was afterwards eaten. This reference to the priestly function of the chief and the prominence of the horse in ceremonial observances will be noted later in connection with Mongol material.¹

There was no regular process or order for assuring the succession to the offices of bij and aqsagal. An incumbent would normally hold office during life or as long as he were able to maintain his authority. Radlov has admirably summed up the status of the bij in saying⁷ that authority was concentrated in individuals who were distinguished by reason of wealth, ability, sense of justice and numerous relatives, who could, if necessary, support words with deeds through their henchmen. He adds significantly: "Da das Nomadvolk keine Wahl des Häuptlings kennt, so ist die Bi-Gewalt gewöhnlich eine Machtausurpation der betreffenden Persönlichkeit und nur selten eine allgemein unbedingt anerkannte."

Radlov's statement summarizes the views of my informants, who said that when the bij died he might perhaps be succeeded by his son, but this was not necessarily the case. It might be by any powerful man who "would appoint himself and say 'I am bij'." (Here the informant was using bij and aqsagal interchangeably.) In any given group it appeared that the successor to office would probably be chosen from among themselves by the five or six wealthiest and most influential members of the aul, who would normally be relatives of one another and heads of the principal family lines of the uru predominating in the aul membership. Meyendorff⁸ notes that the office tended to become hereditary but he who was not able to retain it by merit soon lost it. After the Russian occupation local officials were elected subject to government supervision and approval, which may be the source of Czaplicka's statement⁹ that the Kazak "clan head" is elected.

[623] It should be noted, however, that Pallas¹⁰ refers to a "democratic council" which chose one of its members as war leader when planning a military excursion; Levshin¹¹ mentions assemblies of "relatives, friends and neighbors" called to discuss local questions, which might break up in a wrangle. It is difficult to estimate the nature and scope of these councils and assemblies but I shall revert to the question presently.

[554] Within the uru-aul group relations between the bij and aqsagal on the one hand and the people on the other were apparently more personal than strictly political or governmental. In discussing the nature of economic social groupings we have observed the patron-client relationship between the wealthy herd owners and their poorer kinsmen and dependents. It is difficult to distinguish clearly between economic and political ties and obligations. The bij and aqsagal were usually themselves the largest herd-owners of the aul, or representatives of them as a class. The basic economic and political groups coincided.

⁷ *Aus Siberien*, 1: 913-14.

⁸ *Voyage d'Orenbourg*, 47.

⁹ *Turks of Central Asia*, 49.

¹⁰ *Voyages*, 1: 622-23.

¹¹ *Description des hordes*, 397.

1 [See cat. 116, pp. 78-79 -- Analyst]